

LETTERS FROM LISTENERS . . .

Reception of the New 1YA a "Washout" in Dunedin

To the Editor

Sir,—So far as this part of the Dominion is concerned reception of the new 1YA station is, to put it bluntly, a "washout," as it is impossible to receive it in day time and at night volume is only fair.

Your Otago correspondent tries to explain the failure of this so-called super-station by the fact that the signals have to travel overland, but he forgets the excellent way in which 1XX, 1ZR and 2ZP are received on only a fraction of the power of the new 1YA. I sincerely hope that the Broadcasting Board will refuse to take the station over unless very great improvements can be made in it.—I am, etc.,
GREATLY DISAPPOINTED.

Dunedin.

Praise For New Announcer: And Some Criticism

To the Editor

Sir,—The advent this evening of a 2YA announcer who, besides having a pleasant speaking voice, takes some pains with his pronunciation of foreign names, has been distinctly refreshing. A long-overdue letter on this subject that might have quoted ad nauseam numerous gross mispronunciations complacently repeated with disconcerting regularity, may therefore reject an acrimonious tone in favour of a relatively complimentary one.

Unfortunately, however, only relatively; for, even in this case, certain errors of other announcers were repeated and a few minor ones introduced. For example, the name Schumann, being German, should not have its second syllable nasalised. On the other hand, to hear a good nasalisation of both syllables of Saint-Saens was a distinct improvement on the "Saint Sayin'" one usually hears from 2YA and 2YC. But what of the final "s"? It should be pronounced, as should the z of Berlioz, which is usually heard as "Burly-oh." French names on the whole seem to receive the worst treatment. In some cases honest Anglicising would be preferable to a half-and-half distortion. For example, the composer of a certain famous symphony, Caesar Frank, would be far less irritating than "Sayzar Fronk."

One sometimes hears sounds and peculiarities of one foreign language carried over into another: the pseudo-French pronunciation of Schubert, without the final "t" for example. One of the most difficult things for beginners (and others) to remember in pronouncing French words is to place the principal stress on the final syllable; but when this rule is transferred to Italian (we hear Ver-dee regularly

from Wellington stations) the effect is grotesque. "Giggly" as an attempt on "Gigli" is doubly so.

To the average listener no doubt these atrocities mean nothing, but to anyone who is accustomed to spoken French or German they become more than ridiculous—exasperating. It is not suggested that radio announcers should necessarily devote long hours to an exhaustive study of French, Italian or German, for, after all, the number of words they use is strictly limited. All the more reason, then, why they should get a hold, once and for all, of the foreign names that will form an integral part of their stock-in-trade as long as they remain announcers. A perfectly simple remedy would be the intelligent study of phonetic transcription of the words concerned compiled by a person familiar with French or German pronunciation. Such persons do exist—even in this out-of-the-way country.—I am, etc.,

Wellington.

LINGUIST.

"J. D. Parkin Only Confuses the Issue"

To the Editor

Sir,—I have read with interest the biased views of J. D. Parkin on jazz in the December-28 issue of the "N.Z. Radio Record," and feel that your readers would better appreciate his (her?) pearls of wisdom if he (she?) would answer this small question, "What is jazz?"

I, personally, am very fond of music, and have devoted quite a considerable time to it, both as a listener and a performer, and yet I find it very difficult to state exactly what is "good music." The nearest I can get to it is that good music is music which creates a pleasing impression on a listener, and since listeners vary very considerably in their tastes, it is not possible for me to be a final judge. Many musical items in the national programmes do not appeal to me. When this is the case I turn a switch and leave them to those to whom they do appeal.

J. D. Parkin's extraordinary outburst, referred to above, dealing as it does with H.M. the King, Tannhauser, H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, Venus, Sir Edward Elgar and "Amused," merely serves to confuse the issue and shows such a narrow-minded outlook as to be unworthy of consideration.

May I, in conclusion, congratulate the Broadcasting Board on their many improvements in our programmes, and on doing their best to suit all tastes, and say that personally I consider I'm getting my money's worth?—I am, etc.,

TOLERANCE.

Wellington.

"Putting Up Straw Men and Knocking Them Down"

To the Editor

Sir,—Many thanks to J. D. Parkin for yet another amusing epistle in this week's "Radio Record." Readers must be convulsed with his efforts and his ludicrous use of extravagant language in his fiery denunciation of this "evil," "unholy" jazz.

Come, now, Mr. Parkin! Ponder for a moment, and then realise that upon your valiant shoulders you have placed far too prodigious a load in endeavouring to extirpate from broadcasting that which has become one of the minor arts, much, I take it, to your jealousy.

With your permission, Mr. Editor, may I turn briefly to his remarks as they affect my argument? It is indeed news to me that that little item crooning is not jazz and therefore, as he says, cannot be legitimately added to the votes for dance music in your ballot as indicating that jazz ranks most high in listeners' estimation. I am indeed "squashed"! As for Mr. Parkin's refusal of my statement that modern fox-trots and waltzes are conspicuous by their absence from daily programmes until a late hour, with the exception of what few come from the alternative stations at teatime, and that, in fact, the said programmes are "filled with them ad nauseam," well, sir, I should like to challenge him to enumerate a few. Just as a tip, in case he should attempt the impossible, I will refer him to one fox-trot which I did actually hear in 2YA's breakfast session a week or two ago. All this only goes to show what profound ignorance your correspondent possesses of the subject he is belabouring. He could not, if his life was at stake, differentiate between a fox-trot and a turkey-trot or a bunny-hug. Medleys from films and such-like are not fox-trots to anyone who knows what constitutes rhythm.

Mr. Parkin may assume, as he says, that I am "non compos mentis" if he likes, and I can only plead guilty to the soft impeachment, if it is to be so when, for such a "trifle" as the abolition of jazz from broadcasting which he seeks, I would dispense with the upkeep of my expensive set and license fee. I am amused, further, with his challenge to me, as well as to "Healthy Minded," to my shed my nom de plume. Just as if, sir, my defence of jazz was something from a freak mind and to be ashamed of, when I maintain that I am but a humble one of thousands who hold similar views, only in their case they do not for the most part take part in such a manifestly uncalled-for discussion.

I should like to see a reply from